"OURSELVES."

[At the recent Reunion of Maryland Veterans, in response to the toast "Ourselves," Dr. C. C. Bombaugh, a prominent member of the Grand Army of the Republic, read the following poem:]

When the blast of war blew and the call came "To arms!"
And the only arbitrament left was the sword;
When the bells of secession rang out their alarms,
Who answered the prayer of the flag we adored?
Shall we be accounted vainglorious elves
If among the respondents we number ourselves?

When pleadings for peace were perversely withstood,
And brother was marshaled 'gainst brother in strife;
When rancor demanded the shedding of blood,
The maiming of limb, the surrender of life;
Who followed the pathway of duty and right,
If not such as ourselves who have met here to-night?

When home, friends, and kindred were all left behind
For the martial array of the white-tented field,
Who, unshackled to the duties and hardships assigned,
At once the true soldierly spirit revealed?
The light that illumines that life of the camp—
Whence comes it, if not from your memory's lamp?

When the reveille sounded, Arouse, every man,
To grapple with hard-tack or some of that ilk;
And wash down your bacon as well as you can
With coffee untempered with sugar or milk,
Who bounced up and welcomed the odorous steam
Of Uncle Sam's breakfast? We surely don't dream.

When "the sentinel stars set their watch in the sky,"
And pipes are filled up for a sociable smoke,
When the canteen went round with its smuggled old rye,
And care was forgotten in story and joke,
If you all were not there what is it the while
That relaxes your features with memory's smile?

When the pickets called truce to the rifle's sharp crack,
And met on the bridge of the chasm between,
To swap the small savings of each haversack,
Tobacco for coffee—the ace for the queen.
Was there not in that fruit of forbidden delight
More zest than the incense we burn here to-night?

When the long roll was beat, and men rushed into line,
And the volley received was with volley returned,
When the green sod was deluged with life's crimson wine,
And life on the altar of battle was burned;
Was it not—you who shared in that carnage can tell—
Your ranks that were shattered with shot and with shell?

When the sick and the wounded lay tossing about
On their wearisome cots in the hospital's gloom,
Feebly sighing for home, or death's muster-out,
Still clinging to life, or awaiting their doom,
We know what it was that contracted the brow;
We can feel the fierce heat of that fever-flush now.

Whether conquest or failure, in darkness or light,
Whether crisis or succor, advance or retreat,
How well we recall them! How often we fight
Our battles again when our comrades we meet!
Yet how often these thick-thronging retrospects seem
Like a vision of night—like a terrible dream.

And now that the Angel of Peace spreads her wings
Over States reunited and friendship restored,
Who so ready to meet the new duties it brings?
Who so glad as ourselves not to unsheathe the sword
Unless with confederate brethren we go,
Hand in hand, to repel any alien foe?

JUSTIN VITALI'S CLIENT.

III.

What momentous events may not happen between two paragraphs of a letter interrupted an hour! When Vitali wrote to his sister that he would devote himself to clearing his father's memory "to the exclusion of all other objects or ambitions," he sincerely meant; when he resumed his letter the passage in it was no longer true. His filial piety had not lessened, but a new element of hopes and fears had entered his life. His main object at present was to clear Clotilde Desplans; and when he had done that, what then? Here he asked himself with uneasiness why he should shrink from looking to the time when the professional relations between himself and the young widow should be at an end, and when perhaps she would go away and be never more seen of him. His life would become a cheerless blank again then, as it had been before she had come to him like a sunbeam into a prison cell. He had looked upon her, and it seemed to him that her face must forevermore remain shining before his mind's eyes.

When she had gone, he carefully read through the writ of process with which she had been served, and which, like all such documents in France, was a most elaborate indictment, covering several pages of stamped paper. The terms of it made his blood boil. Accustomed as he was to the calumnious malice of litigants, to the diabolical ingenuity with which a plaintiff's lawyer can pervert the meaning of the simplest acts and words so that they may be made to bear a felonious significance, Justin Vitali nevertheless thought that slander had never been pushed to greater length, and humanity, honor, decency, and common sense never been more outrageously set at defiance, than in this document, which accused Clotilde Desplans of being a false intriguer and swindler. He foresaw that the case would make an immense noise; for, in a country where women's influence is paramount, the public have a great interest in knowing what constitutes an exercise of *undue* influence; then the magnitude of the sum at stake would lend importance to the suit, besides greatly heating the plaintiffs' pleas, for Frenchmen do fight with exceeding desperation for a million francs.

All the other briefs which Vitali had in hand at this time lapsed into the background of his preoccupations; and on the morrow of Madame Desplans's visit, it cost him real physical suffering to go into court and give his attention during three hours to a knotty insurance case. He had scarcely slept through the night from thinking of the extraordinary concourse of circumstances which had made him morally the debtor of Madame Desplans, whom his father had unwittingly ruined. He deemed it nobly generous of her to have said that if he won her suit she would consider they were quits, and most magnanimous of her to have shown such readiness in believing in his father's innocence—a point upon which all the world, ay, his most intimate friends (with whom he had quarrelled on that account) remained sceptics. How could he for a moment mistrust the guiltlessness of one who displayed such confidence in him and his? How could he help longing for the day when he should tear her name spotless as a jewel from the ignoble hands who sought to soil it, or help fretting at the inevitable delays which obliged her to remain under the cloud of foul aspersions for weeks at least, perhaps for months.

In the luncheon interval of the insurance case Vitali stayed in court and wrote Madame Desplans a letter, putting her some questions which he had omitted to ask on the previous day, and sending some general remarks upon the conduct of her case, with the intention of reassuring her. He did not notice that his letter far exceeded in length and in style the usual manner of a business communication, but in all he said he wished to pave the way to an offer to place his purse at her disposal until the trial was ended. It had occurred to him in the night that Madame Desplans's circumstances must be wofully straitened, and that she possibly had not enough to live on in comfort for the next few weeks, setting aside the defrayal of expenses attendant upon the preliminaries of every lawsuit. He was wording his proposal with infinite delicacy, and bidding Madame Desplans regard any loan she would accept as a simple advance on the fortune she would shortly recover, when one of the most eminent *avoues* in Rouen crossed the court and touched his shoulder. It was M. Boidoux, to whom he had been indebted for many a brief.

"Vitali," said M. Boidoux, "I sent you a big brief yesterday, but don't go to work on it yet, for it will have to be amended, as the case is going to be transferred from a civil suit into a criminal action."

"Very well," replied Vitali, nodding absently. "I haven't yet looked at yesterday's briefs. Who are the parties to this one?"

"Henlard, Viel, and some others, versus Desplans, a young widow, and we are for the plaintiffs."

"What?" exclaimed the Corsican, starting as if he had been hit.

"You seem to have heard of the case," observed M. Boidoux, taking a pinch of snuff. "We thought at first we had to do merely with undue influence, but circumstances have come to light which show there was downright murder. Madame Desplans poisoned ——"

"Who told you that?" ejaculated Vitali, with so energetic an expression of indignant fury that M. Boidoux recoiled.

"Heigh! What dog has bitten you? You surely don't take an interest in the defendant?" he asked incredulously.

"I am retained for Madame Desplans, and I mean to go on her case to the end," answered Vitali hotly.

"Oh no, that I am sure you won't!" replied M. Boidoux, wagging his gray head. "You'll drop her brief like a red coal, for I know you. I don't say but that it would have been a pretty case for you to fight, if there had been no proofs of murder, for after all what is undue influence in a pretty woman? Madame Boidoux used no undue influence on me before our marriage, but if she had asked me to convert all my fortune into golden marbles that she might play at ring-taw ——"

"Come to the point, M. Boidoux, I beg," cried Vitali, shaking the lawyer's arm almost brutally. "What do you mean by proofs of murder?"

"Laudanum in the body," replied M. Boidoux positively. "At least we hope to find some there," he added, correcting himself. "Examining the deceased's papers the day before yesterday, we came upon letters in which he expressed fears that Madame Desplans was endeavoring to poison him. These letters had been written by him in bed; they had been put into envelopes, sealed, addressed, and stamped for posting, and it was evident that Madame Desplans had suppressed them. This set us instituting inquiries, and we ascertained that Madame Desplans had on a certain day purchased laudanum. Of course we applied forthwith to the procurator for an order to have Captain Lacroix's body exhumed, and that is being done at this moment. As for Clotilde Desplans, she is in prison; we had her arrested last night."

Muttering a growl and launching a fulminating glance at the lawyer, Vitali fled from the court at the moment when all the parties to the insurance suit were returning to it.

He rushed across the pleaders' hall, flew down a staircase, and with his gown streaming behind him, made for a court-yard leading to the prison-house. But on reaching the open air, he sank discouraged on a stone bench. He recollected that it would be impossible for him to see Clotilde. In France a prisoner apprehended on a criminal charge is kept in solitary confinement (*au secret*) till the examination by the *juge d'instruction* is at end; and sometimes this examination lasts for months. Vitali thought with a shudder of the agonies which the young widow was going to endure, debarred from all communications with the outer world, precluded from seeing any faces save those of her goalers and of the examining magistrate, who day after day would torture her with insidious cross-questions intending to wring from her an avowal of guilt. Some strong men have been known to go mad under this protracted torment; how was a weak, impressionable woman likely to bear up against it?

Vitali went back with aching head and heart to the court, and pleaded for his client in the insurance case. It required a miracle of self-command to enable him to bring his mind to what he was doing, but the very force of his sorrow lent him an artificial strength, and though he spoke with a haggard face and an irritable manner, he won his suit. As he was leaving the court, Boidoux accosted him, looking triumphant.

"I told you how it would be. The *post-mortem* is over, and they have found laudanum in the body."

"I don't believe it," snarled Vitali.

"But come, man—when I tell you so! The doctors say he took a dose fit to kill a family."

"Reason the more. He committed suicide."

"Ah, if you're going to plead that, it's another affair," said the lawyer tranquilly. "But I warn you it will be uphill work; we have a chain of evidence that is flawless."

"Look here, M. Boidoux, have you ever yet known me to plead for a criminal?" asked Vitali, halting, and glaring at the old solicitor as if he would eat him.

"No, my dear fellow, but you're not infallible," said M. Boidoux, buttoning up his top-coat. "At any rate the affair is going to make a pretty fuss. See, it's already in the papers," and he handed the Corsican an evening journal, in a conspicuous part of which was printed in large letters: "MYSTERIOUS POISONING CASE. ARREST OF THE MURDERESS."

IV.

"The Desplans Poisoning-Case," as it was called, was destined to convulse not only the city of M——, but the whole of France. There happened to be no topic of engrossing interest before the public at that moment, and this tale of alleged crime came as a welcome prey for the popular tongues to feed on. The youth and beauty of the suspected murderess, her distinguished social status, the large sum which was supposed to have prompted the murder, all these features combined to invest the affair with a special attractiveness, so that in every place of public meeting throughout the country Madame Desplans and her doings supplanted discussions about politics, new comedies, and new fashions. As the doctrine of contempt of court is unknown in France—at least in the English latter-day application of the same—the newspapers freely commented on the evidence that had come to light. All that could be raked up as to Madame Desplans's antecedents was broadly published; her portrait appeared in the illustrated papers (and a sweet portrait it was), and, under the form of *complaintes*, long-winded ballads descriptive of the crime were whined in the streets by itinerant singers. At first, public opinion was, as almost always happens, dead against the prisoner, but the publication of the portrait caused a reaction; and when it became known that Madame Desplans was to be defended by Justin Vitali, "whose voice had never been lifted up in an unjust cause," the country divided itself into two equal camps, the one largely composed of husbands, married ladies, and old ladies, who trusted that the prisoner would be guillotined; the other made up of all gallant and romantic souls, who enthusiastically, nay, frantically, proclaimed her innocence.

The theory of the prosecution, as regards the prisoner, was briefly summed up thus:

Clotilde Desplans was a person of extravagant tastes. Cold-hearted, willful, fond of finery and generally frivolous, she had married Captain Desplans without concern for his old age, and solely because he was rich. Once married, her conduct had been flagrantly irregular. Captain Desplans had been obliged to forbid Captain Lacroix his house because the latter had made love to Clotilde; and soon Clotilde's reckless expenditure plunged her husband into pecuniary embarrassments, which he sought to override by injudicious speculations, and so ruined himself. From this moment, averred the prosecution, Madame Desplans had formed the project of marrying Captain Lacroix; and if no proof existed of her having poisoned her husband to compass this end, there existed a strong presumption that she had done so, and it was certain that Captain Lacroix had suspected her of this crime. This accounted for his having refused to marry her, though his love for her had been very great; and also for his having addicted himself to drink in the grief which the knowledge of her infamous deed had caused him. It was not denied that during the closing months of his life Captain Lacroix's intellect had been deranged, and many of the letters he had written on his deathbed bore evident traces of insanity; but the prosecution argued that though facts might be exaggerated in these letters, there was a substratum of truth in them, and that they must be taken in connection with the finding of the poison in the deceased's body. Madame Desplans had hurried to Captain Lacroix's house immediately on his being bedridden, and from that moment she had allowed no one to approach him. She had discharged two out of his three servants, and these persons deposed to her having taken possession of the captain's house as if she were mistress of it, to her having been imperious and quick-tempered, and to her having required them to give up the keys of the captain's plate-cupboard, cellars, etc., which she constantly kept about her, with the keys of his desk, bureau, and of a safe that contained his valuables. The third servant, an old woman, who had remained with the captain till his death, stated that Madame Desplans had nursed the captain with great apparent kindness, but she confessed that when the two were alone together she had often overhead the sick man's voice abusing Madame Desplans as a would-be murderess. Moreover, that Madame Desplans had ordered her (the servant) on no account to post any letters the captain might write. A chemist deposed to Madame Desplans having bought laudanum at his shop, and the doctor who attended the sick man gave evidence that he died rather suddenly at a moment when a turn for the better had seemed to supervene in his condition. From this it was inferred that Madame Desplans had poisoned the captain from fear that he would recover, and that when once restored to health he would cancel the testamentary dispositions he had made in her favor at the time whilst her husband was still alive, and while he (Lacroix) still deemed her worthy of his love. As a criminal indictment is never complete in France unless the remotest and least important circumstances in a prisoner's life are laid bare, the examining witness had summoned a former governess of Clotilde's to prove that the prisoner had as a child been headstrong and often unmanageable. A discharged maid swore to her having frequently quarrelled with her husband; a discharged valet of Captain Desplans's had heard her remark at a dinner-party that death by laudanum must be a pleasant death, which clearly pointed to a long preoccupation on the means of taking life, and to a suspicious conversantship with the properties of poisons.

What Justin Vitali suffered whilst all these depositions and conjectures, some terrible, some absurd, came to him piecemeal through newspaper reports, it is impossible to describe. Weeks passed without his being admitted to see Madame Desplans. Her case was in the hands of M. Ragot, a small wizen *juge d'instruction*, who would turn a prisoner over and over as a dog does a bone, and would not let him go so long as a scrap of secret remained to be torn off. This grim man being questioned one day by Vitali as to Madame Desplans's health, answered blandly that the prisoner was as well as could be expected, and that he had given orders that she should want for nothing in the way of comforts compatible with her position. Vitali, who had never spoken to Ragot before, felt that he was committing an imprudence in questioning him; but he could bear the suspense no longer, and he had indulged a furtive hope that he might be able to insinuate a word or two that would propitiate the judge in Clotilde's favor. But his first hints in this direction fell against M. Ragot like paper pellets against a stone wall. M. Ragot was duty incarnate. M. Ragot, though not above five feet high, was a colossus in the science of worming facts out of a prisoner and keeping his counsel about the same till the time came for their official publication. The French code which invests a *juge d'instruction* with the most tremendous of powers—that of examining prisoners in secret, and committing or releasing them on his own sole uncontrolled responsibility—has reared a class of men astute as lynxes, silent as confessors. M. Ragot would not have whispered a secret to the coals on his fire for fear it should be spread by the smoke up the chimney. He confined himself to telling Vitali that his case was progressing "hopefully,"—but "hopefully" in a *juge d'instruction's* mouth means that proofs of crime are thickening, or that the prisoner is being successfully hurried into self-accusation.

Vitali was fain to be patient. With no materials to work with other than those which had been supplied him by Madame Desplans in one short hour's interview, he had to construct a defensive theory of his own, but to do this cost him little trouble, for he considered his whole case to lie clear as the noonday. Captain Lacroix was a madman laboring under that form of hallucination which doctors call "delirium of persecution:" his fears of being poisoned were all a result of his mania and nothing else. The two servants who testified to Clotilde's imperiousness were disreputable persons who had been discharged for misconduct, and who were now revenging themselves. The purchase of the laudanum had probably been made at the sick man's own request, and to procure him sleep at nights—anyhow, the fact that Clotilde had openly bought it, giving her real name and address to the chemist, was irreconcilable with any theory of murder. The same might be said with regard to the suppression of the sick man's letters, and with respect to Clotilde's whole conduct throughout. Nothing was more natural than that she should prevent the wretched maniac's letters from being posted to spread alarm among his friends and make his insanity notorious; but if there had been intent to murder she would not have allowed those letters to survive as evidences of her victim's suspicions. To this Madame Desplans's detractors answered that assassins have in all times been proverbial for lack of foresight, which explains why they are so often found out; but Justin Vitali's reply was that with this system of putting far-fetched constructions upon everything, there is not a person, however innocent, but would have guilt affixed on him.

Talk of pleading unjust causes!—where was Vitali's talk of abstract justice in the present case? If proof had been forthcoming that Clotilde Desplans had been seen to pour the poison into the patient's mouth, he would still have brought forward rebutting arguments. He had become morally deaf and blind to all pleas that did not tally with his deliberate convictions. He did not regard the theories of the prosecution as things to be reasoned with, but demolished.

So time wore on, and Vitali's chivalrous obstinacy and devotion to the cause of the suspected murderess came to be as much matters of public rumor as the details of the "murder" itself. Vitali's equals and rivals at the bar of M—— laughed to see him "gone so mad," and rejoiced to think that after such an unbroken series of forensic successes he was at last going to run amuck and probably cover himself with ridicule. But the younger barristers who could not yet compete with the eminent Corsican advocate, and who were disposed to take him for their model, thought him sublime, and loudly declared their admiration. It was through them and the younger journalists at M—— that Vitali's fame was being trumpeted to all the corners of France. Formerly his celebrity had been purely local, but now there was not a city but was made aware of the renown he had earned by his peculiar conscientiousness; and however the trial might result, it seemed inevitable that the orator of M—— would be obliged in deference to his national popularity to forsake the provincial bar for that of Paris, where a wider field of honors would be open to him. Already Parisian solicitors were writing to him to promise him their patronage in return for his. It was at this juncture that Vitali received a sudden offer of the procurator-generalship at M——. His secret admirer, the Bonapartist prefect, had not forgotten him, and had exercised his influence so diligently that the minister of justice had allowed him to sound the Corsican as to his willingness to become a government servant. Before the Desplans case Vitali would have refused the offer on pecuniary grounds, for his duty towards his father's creditors compelled him to prefer money to honors; but it flashed upon him that if he became procurator the conduct of the prosecution against Madame Desplans would devolve upon him *ex officio*. Now public prosecutors enjoy a good deal of latitude. They receive the commitment writs of the *juges d'instruction*, and it lies within their discretion to suspend proceedings on the ground that the evidence taken before the examining magistrate was insufficient. Or if the case be brought to trial, they can abandon the prosecution in court, declaring that the evidence they have heard has convinced them of the prisoner's innocence. It is not often that procurators do this, and Vitali knew that the deputy procurator of M——, who would have charge of the case if *he* had not, was one of those men who feel professionally bounden to assert a prisoner's guilt to the very end. It sickened him to think that this narrow-headed functionary would slaver the venom of his salaried animus on Clotilde's purity. He reflected that Clotilde would leave the court with a prouder head if her acquitment, instead of being wrung from the jury by a counsel's speech, were brought about by the public prosecutor abandoning the charge in the name of society; and as for getting another advocate to take his place as the prisoner's counsel, this matter gave him no uneasiness, for he modestly thought that any barrister of heart could defend Clotilde as well as he could. These considerations induced him to call on the prefect and accept the proffered post.

"Ah, well done!" said the ruler of the department, motioning him amicably to a seat. "We were in some dread that you would refuse; but remember that this appointment is only the first rung of the ladder which you can climb if you are willing. The elections are coming on, and I may tell you confidentially that if you like to stand in the Bonapartist interest—you *are* an Imperialist, I believe?"

"Yes," said Vitali, "and if I can be of any service to the cause I shall be happy to requite the honor you have done me. But I will frankly tell you why I accept this post," and he proceeded to enounce his reasons—with an emotion in breathing Madame Desplans's name which would have struck any observer.

"Oh, oh!" said the prefect, becoming grave, but speaking with a smile. "We all know of your partisanship in this celebrated cause, M. Vitali, but let me give you a friend's advice and urge you to keep aloof from Madame Desplans's affairs on undertaking your new duties. Touching as it is to see you champion the suspected pr—lady—so warmly in a private capacity, it might greatly damage your public career if you began by occasioning a miscarriage of justice."

"But it would not be a miscarriage of justice!" exclaimed Vitali with animation. "Do you think I would defend Madame Desplans if I deemed her guilty? It is because I would answer for her innocence with my head on the block that I long to set her free and restore her fair fame as a public official speaking for my country."

"That is all very good," responded the prefect, "but the world would not believe in so much impartiality."

"But they must be brought to believe it."

"My dear M. Vitali, when we cannot go against the stream one had better swim with it."

"What! when that stream is bearing an innocent creature to infamy and death?"

"Come, come, you must really allow me to guide you," said the prefect with the good-humored authority of an experienced statesman. "Recollect you are my *protege;* I look to your running a very brilliant race, and we must not let you mar it at the start. So if you positively cannot refrain from being romantic and generous, I will have your appointment deferred till the trial is over."

"Ah, it would be no use to me then!" cried Vitali in despair. "It was for *her* I was going to accept, not for me."

He returned home in very low spirits. The prefect's manifest conviction of Clotilde's guilt depressed him more than anything he had yet heard from other persons; and for the first time he began to contemplate the possibility of not being able to carry a verdict against public prejudice. Hitherto he had been buoyed up by the confidence that on going into court he would straightway break down the flimsy structure of the prosecution like a house of cards; but what if his eloquence failed?—what if the jury were stubborn and closed their eyes to the light of truth that he would thrust before their faces? It chanced that for the past few days there had been a lull in the newspaper comments on the Desplans case. Everything that could be said about the preliminaries of the affair had been said and miss-said, and the public were now taking a rest from conjecture in expectation of the impending final act of the drama. Gloomy presentiments and visions began to pass through Vitali's brain. He saw a densely packed court full of cruel faces, a bench of obstinate judges, a ruthless sentence pronounced amid a silence broken only by the sobs of an innocent prisoner; then a public square with a machine rearing aloft two huge red posts and a knife; a fainting form dragged up the scaffold steps, and the roar of a surging multitude. It was evening, and he shivered. The noise of carts passing in the street under his windows suggested tumbrils, and the occasional voices of workmen and boys, singing, that heartless indifference of crowds who go their ways not caring for blood that has been shed, even though it cry to them from the stones.

A knock at his door roused Vitali from his reverie, and his servant came in with a letter. It bore the stamp of the palace of justice. Vitali's fingers trembled as he tore it open, and he scanned its contents, then staggered, raising his hand to his brow and uttering an awful moan as he read this!

"MY DEAR SIR:

"The preliminary examination of Clotilde Desplans is at an end, and you will be free to visit her to confer about her defence every day, dating from to-morrow. I feel some satisfaction in informing you that the prisoner has at length made a confession of her guilt.

"Pray accept the assurances of my regard,

"THOMAS RAGOT,
"*Juge d'Instructions.*"

[To be continued.]

A GAME FOR THE CHILDREN.

"What in the world is that?" asked the young folk of Don and Dorry, and their host and hostess candily admitted that they hadn't the slightest idea what it was. They never had heard of it before.

"Well, then, how can we play it?" insisted the little spokes-people.

"I don't know," answered Dorry, looking in a puzzled way at the door.

"All join hands and form a circle!" cried a voice.

Every one arose, and soon the circle stood expectant.

"Your dear great great fairy godmother is coming to see you," continued the voice. "She is slightly deaf, but you must not mind that."

"Oh, no, no!" cried the laughing circle, "not in the least."

"She brings her white gnome with her," said the invisible speaker, "and don't let him know your names or he will get you into trouble."

"No, no, no!" cried the circle wildly.

A slight stirring was heard in the hall, the door is opened, and in walked the fairy godmother and her white gnome.

She was a tall, much bent old woman, in a ruffled cap, a peaked hat, and a long red cloak. He, the gnome, wore red trousers and red sleeves. The rest of his body was dressed in a white pillow-case, with armholes cut in it. It was gathered at his belt; gathered also by a red ribbon tied around the throat; the corners of the pillow-case tied with narrow ribbon formed his ears, and there was a white bandage over the eyes, and a round opening for his mouth. The godmother dragged in a large sack, and the gnome bore a stick with bells at the end.

"Let me into the ring, dears," squeaked the fairy godmother.

"Let me into the ring, dears," growled the white gnome.

The circle obeyed.

"Now, my dears," squeaked the fairy godmother, "I've brought you a bagful of lovely things, but, you must know, I am under an enchantment. All I can do is to let you each take out a gift when your turn comes, but when you send me a 'Thank-you,' don't let my white gnome know who it is, for if he guesses your name you must put the gift back without opening the paper. But if he guesses the wrong name, then you may keep the gift. So now begin, one at a time. Keep the magic circle moving until my gnome knocks three times."

Around went the circle, eager with fun and expectation. Suddenly the blinded gnome pounded three times with his stick, and then pointed it straight in front of him, jingling the little bells. Tommy Budd was the happy youth pointed at.

"Help yourself, my dear," squeaked the fairy godmother as she held the sack toward him. He plunged his arm into the opening and brought out a neat paper parcel.

"Hey! What did you say, dear?" she squeaked. "Take hold of the stick."

Tommy seized the end of the stick, and said, in a harsh tone:

"Thank you, ma'am."

"That's John Stevens," growled the gnome. "Put it back! put it back!"

But it wasn't John Stevens, and so Tommy kept the parcel.

The circle moved again. The gnome knocked three times, and this time the stick pointed to Dorry. She tried to be polite, and direct her neighbor's hand to it, but the godmother would not hear of that.

"Help yourself, child," she squeaked, and Dorry did. The paper parcel which she drew from the sack was so tempting and pretty, all tied with ribbon, that she really tried very hard to disguise the "Thank-you," but the gnome was too sharp for her.

"No, no!" he growled. "That's Dorothy Reed's. Put it back! put it back!"

And poor Dorry dropped the pretty parcel into the bag again.

So the merry game went on; some escaped detection and saved their gifts; some were detected and lost them; but the godmother would not suffer those who had parcels to try again, and therefore, in the course of the game, those who failed at first succeeded after a while. When all had parcels, and the bag was nearly empty, what did that old fairy do but straighten up, throw off her hat, cap, false face, and cloak, and if it wasn't Uncle George himself, very red in the face, and very glad to be out of his prison. Instantly one and all discovered that they had known all along it was Mr. Reed.

"Ha! ha!" they laughed; "and now," starting in pursuit—"let's see who the white gnome is!"

They caught him at the foot of the stairs, and were not very much astonished when Ed. Tyler came to light.

"That is a splendid game!" declared some. "Grand!" cried others. "Fine," "first-rate," "glorious," "capital," "as good as Christmas," said the rest. Then they opened their parcels, and there was great rejoicing.—*St. Nicholas.*

NOTES FOR THE LADIES.

Two feminine homœopathic physicians have begun to practice in St. Louis.

Miss Longfellow, the poet's daughter, is fitting up a Massachusetts room in Washington's Mount Vernon.

Emma Abbott carries a dagger on the stage valued at $16,500. Many a man, not a Macbeth, wouldn't object to clutch that kind of a dagger.

Rev. Mr. Swing says "that a novel is the world's truth with a beautiful woman walking through it." Generally, we may add, with a man after her.—*Christian Union.*

Mrs. Mackay, the bonanza person, is preparing to entertain two hundred guests at a costume assembly in Paris. A large tent will be erected for the occasion in the garden overlooking the Arc de Triumphe.

William Thompson was fined $25 by Justice Frost, of Glen Cove, N. Y., for throwing his arms around Mrs. Susie A. Monfort and attempting to kiss her. She slapped his face and cut him under the eye with her ring.

Washington girls are very anxious to know whether President Arthur intends to remarry. One of them says: "Well, if he is going to, I wish he would. It would be a leap from the purgatory of doubt to the paradise of certainty."

They were riding in the horse-car past the poet's door when one of the ladies remarked: "That's Longfellow's home." "Is it?" responded the other carelessly. "Yes," said the first, "and don't you admire 'Excelsior?'" "No, I don't," replied lady No. 2, with energy; "I hate it. There's nothing like curled hair, after all, though husks ain't so bad; but I wouldn't have excelsior again in the house."—*Boston Transcript.*

A woman walked into a St. Louis newspaper office with a manuscript entitled "The Birth, Mission, and Destiny of the Great American Republic, as Foreshadowed in the Sacred Scriptures and the White Horse of Revelation, So Vividly Foretold in the Gorgeous Symbolic Language of St. John." While she was talking to one of the clerks somebody stole the production, and no amount of advertising was sufficient to bring it back.

HINTS TO HOUSEKEEPERS.

WHITE SAUCE FOR A PAIR OF FOWLS.—One and a half pints of milk, one and a half ounce of rice, one strip of lemon; peel and pound the milk and rice together; put it back into the stewpan to warm, add the mace and the seasoning, give it one boil and serve. This sauce should be of the consistency of thick cream. A simple and inexpensive method.

GINGER-SNAPS.—Melt a quarter of a pound of butter, the same quantity of lard; mix them with a quarter of a pound of brown sugar, a pint of molasses, a couple of teaspoonfuls of ginger and a quart of flour; dissolve a couple of teaspoonfuls of saleratus in a wineglassful of milk, and strain it into the cake: add sufficient flour to enable you to roll it out very thin, cut it into small cakes and bake them in a slow oven.

OYSTER OMELET.—Whisk six eggs to a stiff froth, then add by degrees, a cup of cream or milk, salt to taste; have ready one dozen fine oysters, cut them in half. Pour the egg into a pan of hot butter, and drop the oysters over it as equally as possible; fry a light brown and serve at once. It should never be turned.

A GOOD SAUCE FOR STEAKS.—One ounce of whole black pepper, half ounce of allspice, one ounce of salt, half ounce of grated horse-radish, half ounce of pickled shallots, one pint of mushroom capsup or walnut pickle. Pound all the ingredients finely in a mortar, and put them into the catsup or walnut liquor. Let them stand for a fortnight, when strain off the liquor and bottle for use. Either pour a little sauce over the steaks, or mix in the gravy.

WINTER SALADS.—(1) Slice a cold boiled or baked beet root; arrange it in slices overlapping each other; pour a mixture over made with cream, a very little vinegar, pepper, and salt; garnish the dish with horse-radish and hard-boiled eggs, whites and yelks separate. (2) Slice some cold boiled carrots; arrange them in a dish with a dressing made with cream and lemon juice, or oil and vinegar, with pepper and salt; garnish the dish with hard-boiled eggs shredded, with minced parsley and capers and chopped olives. (3) Pick the flower from one or two cold boiled cauliflowers dispose them in a dish, and pour over the some dressing made with cream and lemon juice, or oil and vinegar, with pepper and salt to taste; garnish with minced parsley, powdered sweet herbs and capers.